United Nations

Report of the Ad Hoc Committee on the Indian Ocean

5 July 2001

General Assembly
Official Records
Fifty-sixth Session
Supplement No. 29 (A/56/29)

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Note

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Contents

Chapter		*Paragraphs*	*Page*
I.	**Introduction**	1–5	1
II.	**Work of the Ad Hoc Committee in 2001**	6–14	2
	A. Agenda of the Ad Hoc Committee	6	2
	B. Report of the Chairman of the Committee pursuant to paragraph 3 of General Assembly resolution 54/47	7–10	2
	C. Recommendations	11	3
	D. Introduction and adoption of the report of the Ad Hoc Committee to the General Assembly at its fifty-sixth session	12–14	4

Chapter I
Introduction

1. By its resolution 54/47 of 1 December 1999, the General Assembly, after taking note of the report of the Ad Hoc Committee on the Indian Ocean (A/54/29),[1] requested the Chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee to continue his informal consultations with the members of the Committee and to report through the Committee to the General Assembly at its fifty-sixth session.

2. Pursuant to General Assembly resolution 54/47, the Ad Hoc Committee held its session on 5 July 2001 at United Nations Headquarters, in New York. The Committee held one formal meeting, and the Chairman also held a number of consultations and meetings during 2001.

3. The following delegations made statements in the general discussion under agenda item 3: Australia, China, Indonesia, Madagascar and Mozambique.

4. The Ad Hoc Committee is composed of the following States:

(a) Members (43)

Australia
Bangladesh
Bulgaria
Canada
China
Djibouti
Egypt
Ethiopia
Germany
Greece
India
Indonesia
Iran (Islamic Republic of)
Iraq
Italy
Japan
Kenya
Liberia
Madagascar
Malaysia
Maldives
Mauritius
Mozambique
Netherlands
Norway
Oman
Pakistan
Panama
Poland
Romania
Russian Federation
Seychelles
Singapore
Somalia
Sri Lanka
Sudan
Thailand
Uganda
United Arab Emirates
United Republic of Tanzania
Yemen
Zambia
Zimbabwe

(b) Observers: Nepal, South Africa, Sweden.

5. The elected officers of the Ad Hoc Committee were the following:

Chairman:
Mr. John de Saram (Sri Lanka)

Vice-Chairpersons:
Ms. Bronte Moules (Australia)
Mr. Carlos dos Santos (Mozambique)
Mr. Hazairin Pohan (Indonesia)

Rapporteur:
Ms. Radafiarisoa Lea Raholinirina (Madagascar)

Chapter II
Work of the Ad Hoc Committee in 2001

A. Agenda of the Ad Hoc Committee

6. At its 448th meeting, the Ad Hoc Committee adopted the following agenda (A/AC.159/L.130):

1. Opening of the session.
2. Adoption of the agenda.
3. Report the Chairman of the Committee pursuant to paragraph 3 of General Assembly resolution 54/47 of 1 December 1999.
4. Report of the Ad Hoc Committee to the General Assembly at its fifty-sixth session.
5. Other matters.

B. Report of the Chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee pursuant to paragraph 3 of General Assembly resolution 54/47

7. At its 448th meeting, on 5 July 2001, the Ad Hoc Committee considered agenda item 3 on the report of the Chairman of the Committee pursuant to paragraph 3 of General Assembly resolution 54/47 of 1 December 1999. The Chairman of the Committee made the following comprehensive statement on his consultations:

> "This Committee — the Ad Hoc Committee on the Indian Ocean, established by the General Assembly — last reported to the General Assembly two years ago at the fifty-fourth session of the General Assembly in 1999.
>
> "The report of the Committee to the General Assembly in 1999 is contained in document A/54/29.[1]
>
> "The agenda item under which the report of the Committee was submitted to the General Assembly was entitled 'Implementation of the Declaration of the Indian Ocean as a Zone of Peace'.
>
> "It has unfortunately not been possible to reach a consensus on the manner of implementation of the Declaration of the Indian Ocean as a Zone of Peace.
>
> "In 1997, the General Assembly at its fifty-second session and then again in 1999 at its fifty-fourth session, expressed the conviction that participation of all the permanent members of the Security Council and the major maritime users of the Indian Ocean in the work of the committee is important and would greatly facilitate the development of a mutually beneficial dialogue to develop conditions of peace, security and stability in the Indian Ocean region.
>
> "In 1999, the General Assembly, in paragraph 3 of resolution 54/47, requested the Chairman of the Committee to continue his informal consultations.

"The General Assembly also requested the Chairman of the Committee to report through the Committee to the General Assembly at its fifty-sixth session in 2001.

"Pursuant to paragraph 3 of General Assembly resolution 54/47, I have had consultations with members of the Committee. I have not been able to reach all the members of the Committee, yet I believe I have been able to reach very many.

"The three permanent members of the Security Council that do not participate in the Committee — namely, France, the United Kingdom and the United States of America — have not, they have informed me, changed their positions on non-participation in the work of the Committee and, for that reason, they still remain unable to participate in the work of the Committee.

"While the objectives of the 1971 Declaration of the Indian Ocean as a Zone of Peace are deemed by many to be an ideal, it is difficult to escape the conclusion that implementation of the Declaration gives rise to a number of difficulties, and that, accordingly, progress in implementation of the Declaration still remains elusive.

"The general view I was able to gather as a result of the informal consultations I had was that some further time still needed to elapse before a focused discussion, on practical measures to ensure conditions of peace, security and stability in the Indian Ocean region, would seem possible.

"I would hope, therefore, notwithstanding the difficulties that still remain, that the Committee could conclude that the General Assembly should allow some further time for consultations on how measures envisaged in the Declaration of the Indian Ocean as Zone of Peace could, perhaps, be considered in a more focused manner."

8. During the meeting, an exchange of views took place on, inter alia, the work of the Ad Hoc Committee.

9. The Ad Hoc Committee reaffirmed the conclusions it had reached during its 1994, 1995 and 1996 sessions and emphasized the need to foster consensual, step-by-step approaches, particularly given the propitious international climate, which was conducive to the pursuit of such endeavours. The Committee reaffirmed the commitment to the realization of the goals of peace, security and stability in the Indian Ocean region.

10. The Ad Hoc Committee remained convinced that the participation of all permanent members of the Security Council and the major maritime users in the work of the Committee was important and would assist the progress of a mutually beneficial dialogue aimed at developing conditions of peace, security and stability in the region.

C. Recommendations

11. The Chairman was requested to continue informal consultations with the members of the Ad Hoc Committee and to report through the Ad Hoc Committee to the General Assembly at its fifty-eighth session.

D. Introduction and adoption of the report of the Ad Hoc Committee to the General Assembly at its fifty-sixth session

12. At its 448th meeting, on 5 July 2001, the Rapporteur of the Ad Hoc Committee introduced the draft report of the Committee (A/AC.159/L.131).

13. In that connection, the Chairman informed the members of the Committee of his intention to hold informal consultations concerning the text of the resolution to be submitted to the General Assembly at its fifty-sixth session.

14. At the same meeting, the Ad Hoc Committee considered and adopted its report to the General Assembly as amended.

Notes

[1] *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-fourth Session, Supplement No. 29.*

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